

Customs and History of Dardistan.

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mountains with their palaces and songs. Again, it is not 779
 Islam that tells them of the regeneration of their country 77/
 by fairies—that places these lovely beings on the top of the
 Himalayas and makes them visit, and ally themselves to,
 mankind. The fairies too are not all good, as the Yatsh
 are not all bad. They destroy the man who seeks to
 surprise their secrets, although, perhaps, they condone the
 offence by making him live for ever after in fairy-land.
 Indeed, the more we look into the national life of the [81]
 Dards the less do we find it tinctured by Muhammadan
 distaste of compromise. Outwardly their customs may
 conform to that ceremonial, but when they make death an
 opportunity for jokes and amusement we cannot refuse
 attention to the circumstance by merely explaining it away [564]
 on the ground that they are savages. I have noticed the
 prevalence of caste among them, how proud they are of
 their Shin descent, how little (with the exception of the
 more devout Chilâsis) they draw upon Scripture for their
 personal names, how they honour women and how they
 like the dog, an animal deemed unclean by other Muham-
 madans. The Dards had no hesitation in eating with me, [604]
 but I should not be surprised to hear that they did not do
 so when Mr. Hayward visited them, for the Hinduized
 Mussulman servants that one takes on tours might have
 availed themselves of their supposed superior knowledge of
 the faith to inform the natives that they were making an
 improper concession to an infidel. A good many Dards,
 however, have the impression that the English are Mussul-
 mans—a belief that would not deter them from killing or
 robbing a European traveller in some districts, if he had
 anything “worth taking.” Gouhar-Amán [called “Gôrmán”
 by the people] of Yasin used to say that as the Koran, the
 word of God, was sold, there could be no objection to sell
 an expounder of the word of God, a Mulla, who unfor-
 tunately fell into his hands. I did not meet any real Shin
 who was a Mulla,* but I have no doubt that, especially in

* I have already related that a foreign Mulla had found his way to
 Gilgit, and that the people, desirous that so holy a man should not leave